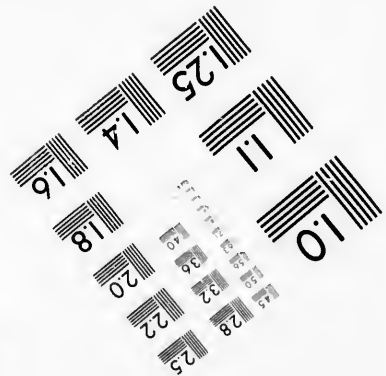
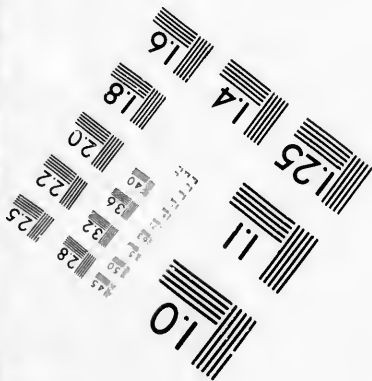
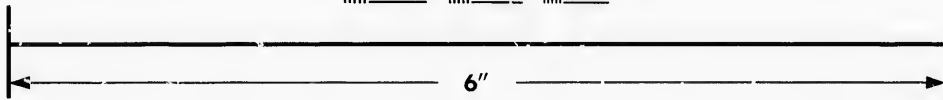
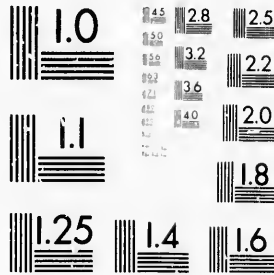


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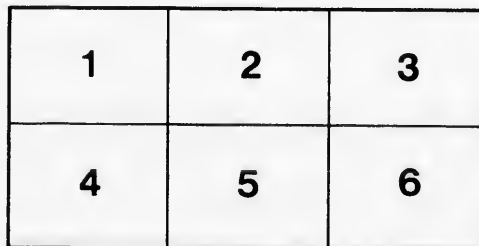
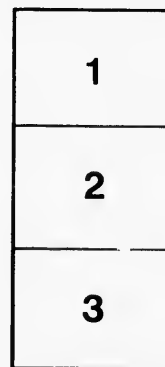
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A BRIEF CHRONICLE

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King, Thomas D

The Chapel of Ste. Croix,

TADOUSAC,

AT THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER SAGUENAY,

ON THE

RIVER ST. LAWRENCE,

Embodied in an Appeal to Canadians of
all Denominations for
their Generous Support in aid of its
Enlargement and Decoration.

(From The Canadian Antiquarian and Numismatic Journal.)

MONTREAL:

HENRY ROSE, PRINTER, 626 CRAIG STREET.

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King, Thomas D.



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CHAPEL AT TADOUSAC.



INTRODUCTORY.



THE object of this appeal is to endeavour to enlist the sympathy and support of all Canadians on behalf of one of the most interesting ecclesiastical edifices in the Dominion—the Chapel of Ste. Croix at Tadousac ; a structure which, in addition to the claims it presents as one of the earliest places of Christian worship on the St. Lawrence, derives a deep interest from its connection not only with the early Christian missionaries but with the early commerce and civilization of Canada.

If the piety of our forefathers in England, Scotland, Ireland, and France, during the dark ages, prompted them to perform such glorious works as the building and endowing noble cathedrals to the praise and glory of God, not grudging to give of all they had, not thinking that anything could, by any possibility, be too costly for the service that they made, what should be expected from those who rejoice in the brightness of a better and more enlightened age ?

Let us reverence the spirit of self-sacrifice of the dark ages (as they are contumeliously termed,) and see with what a noble ardour the men of those days devoted *all*,—money, time, thought, hope, life itself,—to raising for God and man shrines as worthy of God as human hands could raise, and fit and able to lift man's thoughts and hopes beyond Earth, and lead them on heavenward. They did not sit down to sum up the exact cost of glorifying God ; they did not calculate exactly how many the holy roof would cover ; they

knew with their hearts, if their tongues never uttered, the truth, that

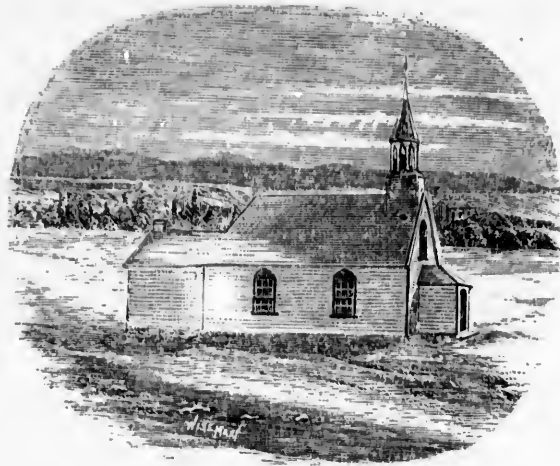
“ High Heaven disdains the love
Of nicely calculated less and more.”

If the night of those dark ages is now spent, and the morning-star of Civilization has extended its light on Canada, surely it will be an act of piety to erect a monument in memorial of those men by whom the glad tidings of Christianity and the blessings of Literature, Science, and Commerce, were first brought to the shores of the St. Lawrence. If so, let me appeal with confidence to the reader of the following Chronicle to give his offering with cheerfulness towards the enlargement and decoration of the Chapel of Ste. Croix. In order to properly carry out the work it will, according to estimates, cost about 1500 dollars, which the poor residents at Tadousac cannot raise. The object in view is not superficial decoration, but substantial restoration and enlargement,—not the idle display of excessive ornament, which would be incongruous, but the extension of church accommodation to all who desire to profit by the ordinances and ministrations of the sanctuary. The money collected will be spent wisely and well.

In conclusion, the writer trusts that the same spirit will be put in the hearts of all who read this appeal that was put into the hearts of Josiah, Hezekiah, and Ezra, to repair the breaches of the Temple, so that nothing may be wanting to complete the proposed work. *So mote it be.*

T. D. K.





TADOUSAC AND THE CHAPEL OF STE. CROIX.



THE object of this paper is not to dwell on the grandeur and even sublimity of the wonderful Saguenay, which some travellers think is fit to rank with Styx and Acheron, and that Lethe must have been a purling brook compared with its wild, gloomy and savage character. The awful majesty of its mountainous and rocky shores, and its dark-grey cliffs of sienitic granite, in the crevices of which are rooted sombre-green firs from the pitch black water line to their lofty summits, fringing the blue sky, has been the theme of poets, and the admiration of all who are impressed with the austere beauties of nature, in her most wild and rugged aspect. To all lovers of the sublime it exercises a fascination which is irresistible. The contrast in its scenery and that of Lakes George, Champlain and Memphremagog, or the River Hudson from West Point to the Palisades, or the River St. Lawrence, through the Thousand Isles, is as great as that between *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*.

In the one landscape we may imagine Euphrosyne with
her

Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles ;

and in the other Melancholy in her

Sable stole of cypress lawn,
All in a robe of darkest grain,—
Of Cerberus and blackest midnight born
In Stygian cave forlorn.

After the voyageur has traversed the river in either of the well appointed and ably commanded steamers, the *Union*, or the *Saguenay*, or the *St. Lawrence*, and entered into communion with savage, unconquered nature, it would be well if he remained for even a week and enjoyed the quietude of Tadousac, which, according to Mr. J. C. Taché, "is placed like a nest in the midst of the granite rocks that surround the mouth of the Saguenay. It is a delicious place."

It cannot be called a town, or a village, or a hamlet ; it is not beautiful, yet there is to the writer an enchantment in the place ; it breathes a charm of ancient days, its very name takes us back to the cradle of the history of Canada, and to the beginning of its commerce with Europe, and more, to the very dawn of the Christian Religion and missionary enterprise on this continent. Jacques Cartier landed here in the beginning of September, 1535, about forty years after the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, and the discovery of Newfoundland by John Cabot. In the mirror of the past we can see the intrepid mariner and his hardy companions planting the cross on the site of the little chapel of Ste. roix de Tadousac, of which more anon. For its restoration, enlargement and decoration I shall presently plead.

Tadousac, in the Montagnais dialect, means mounds, *Mamelons*. Some derive it from the Montagnais expression, *Shashuko*, which signifies *The Place of Lobsters* ; others say the meaning of the word Tadousac is the *The Mouth of a*

Sack; to some Indian Tribes it was known under the name of *Sadilege*.

At Tadousac Champlain found ships in 1610, and remarks that they had arrived as early as the 19th May; in 1622 it became a regular trading post, and in 1648 the Tadousac traffic yielded more than 40,000 *livres* in clear profit, and the commercial transactions, in amount, exceeded 250,000 *livres*; the weight of the furs being as much as 24,400 lbs.

The harbour of Tadousac is on the eastern side of the entrance to the Saguenay. It is a semicircular bay, with a sandy beach at its head, and rather more than half a mile wide and a third of a mile deep, and is so well sheltered in every direction that no sea of any consequence rises to prevent even a boat from entering the harbour. This bay or harbour played an important part in our early history as a stopping place for French and Basque vessels engaged in the fisheries, and we learn from Mr. J. M. LeMoine's *Chronicles of the St. Lawrence* that Chauvin had founded a fishing port at Tadousac as early as 1599, but whether the ships or "argosies with portly sail," which first brought to our shores Cartier, de Roberval, Champlain, and Kertk, made use of the bay, or the small picturesque, and we may say unique cove of *L'Anse à l'Eau*, the *Chronicles* do not tell. It is very probable the bay was used as the harbour, because we learn by Mère de l'Incarnation that the Tadousac Fort was burnt with the dwelling quarters and church in 1665. The fort must have been in existence prior to 1628, for in that year the English Admiral, William Kertk, took possession of it, and subsequently it was restored to the French in 1632. In 1636 Father Paul le Jeune, a Jesuit missionary, came to Tadousac to convert the Indians; in 1642 Father Jean Dequen entered upon the mission with great courage, and was received with welcome and demonstrations of joy by the Indians, who erected a cabane, part of which was dedicated to

the worship of God and served as a chapel. In 1644 Father Jacques Buteux reconstructed the cabane partly with bricks imported from France, and herein the Indians used to assemble for religious instruction. Madame la Peltrie, accompanied by two nuns from the Ursuline Order, came this year to Tadousac and became godmother to the Indians, many of whom were baptized and initiated into the Christian Church, and, doubtless, they embraced their new religion with zeal, for in 1646 they erected a grand cross with great joy, accompanied by a *feu de joie* from the arquebusades belonging to the fort. On the foundation of Religion, as on a rock, is ever built the permanent advancement of a country, its reputation and its happiness. And Canada may well thank those noble hearts, who, as pioneers in the wilderness, and struggling with all its difficulties and dangers, maintained with courage and devotion the faith and habits of their fathers. We cannot measure the controlling influence of the Religion then instilled into the minds of the Indians in the Province of Quebec, or the beneficial effects it has had upon the civilization of their descendants. A writer in 1855 says: "The traveller through the backwoods of Canada often recognizes the clergyman, not by the habiliments common to his calling, but by the weather beaten and mud bespattered look of one who travels far over the rough ways of the earth, to visit and to bring consolation to the poor and lonely." The same writer records having seen in Western Canada "the clergyman dripping with rain and bespattered with mud, having travelled thirty miles, and two more services to perform that day in the neighbouring district, and then having to retrace his way homewards another thirty miles." If such hardihood and devotion is worthy of praise, what must we say of the hardihood and devotion of those old Jesuit Fathers who were exposed in the winter at Tadousac to a degree of cold and its effects, which Milton, in his de-

scription of Satan and his compeer; after adverting to Styx, thus describes :—

Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark, and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile : all else deep snow and ice.

What must we think of them? Ought not the present memorial of their work, the chapel of Ste. Croix de Tadousac, to be rehabilitated and embellished?—Ought it not to be held as sacred as a shrine? What suffering and misery, what sad and painful episodes there must have been in the lives of those devoted missionaries, the pioneers of the civilization and evangelization of the once benighted regions of the Saguenay! The writer of this appeal, for such it will be, is an Anglican, one who has for many years enjoyed the boating and yachting in the Lower St. Lawrence, and the fishing in the Saguenay, the Bergeron and the Esquemain. After having had a rough passage in one of the decked fishing boats belonging to the family Hovington, whose name is as familiar as household words to all frequenters of the Tadousac Hotel, he has felt a relief to go into the chapel of Ste. Croix and offer up his Hymn of Thanksgiving.

But to return to the history of the chapel:—In 1647 the Jesuits brought a bell for the chapel, said to be the gift of Louis XIV of France; it was not injured during the fire of 1665, and is now hanging in the belfry of the present little church or chapel of Ste. Croix. The Jesuit Fathers held the mission until the year 1782. Father J. B. de la Brosse was the last, and it was he who built the confessional which is now to be seen in the sacristy, which is a very undignified portion of the chapel, and is as devoid of architectural embellishment as one of the ordinary cabanes of the district.

In 1747, during the bishopric of Monseigneur Dubriol de

Pontbriant, of Quebec, Father Coquart, Jesuit, blessed the ground on which the present chapel is built, and drove the first wedge. Monsr. Hocquart, Intendant of New France, granted all the planks, beams, shingles and nails necessary for the building. On the 16th of May, 1747, the foundation was laid, and it is recorded upon a piece of lead about $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch thick and $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches square (see fac-simile of the original). From it we learn that in the year 1747, the 16th of May, M. Cugent was farmer of the Establishment; F. Doré, Clerk or Agent; Michael Lavoye, builder, and Father P. Coquart, Jesuit, being in charge of the Mission, laid the foundation of the edifice. In 1749 Father Coquart received 260 livres (francs) for the chapel, which was covered over (roofed in) that year. On the feast of St. John the Baptist, 1750, the chapel was completed and valued at 3,000 livres (\$600) by Mr. Guillerim, one of the Council of Quebec and King's Commissioner.

The interior of the chapel is very rude, ill garnished, and altogether dilapidated; it evidences a sign of poverty amongst the inhabitants, which poverty is alas too true, and although the visitor does not see the goblin cheek, the wretched eye, nor hear the long lamentable groan or whining of distress, yet the poverty is observable in the cabanes of the "natives," who depend chiefly for their subsistence upon the visitors who frequent Tadousac in the summer months.

The chapel and the hotel occupy the front edge of a plateau on the summit of an escarped height facing the bay or harbour, which has a fine sandy beach. This beach is a safe play-ground for children, and, in calm weather, is free from surf and convenient for boating and bathing. It is also a safe resting place in a tempest for the sail boats of the fishermen, whose cabanes skirt the shores of the bay, and are within the sound of the chapel bell, which is very sonorous.

The chapel itself is very small and not large enough to ac-

commodate the people committed to the charge of the priest, Père Félix Gendron ; its dimensions being only 30 feet long by 25 feet wide, with a rudely constructed gallery in the west. In the so-called sanctuary there is a "gilded tabernacle," the gift of a Mrs. Conolly, wife of one of the "burgesses" of the Hudson's Bay Company. There is neither altar-piece nor altar-screen. The altar itself is poor in design, and devoid of apparel save some common wall paper of a floriated pattern, which material serves in the plain homely rectangular-shaped windows instead of mullions, tracery, and stained glass, with effigies of our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles, and Evangelists. Within the altar rails are two oil paintings, date the 18th century ; they are meritorious pictures, and are, deservedly, objects of great attraction. The one on the right is called "The Guardian Angel." The principal figure is an angel reaching forth his helpful hand and conducting a child in the right way ; it is emblematic of the text in Psalm xvii. 5,—"Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." The other, on the left, is the "Presentation of Mary in the Temple," and is signed Bauvais, 1747. Unfortunately, in consequence of the smallness of the windows, and the absence of light where there should be light, the good qualities of these paintings can neither be appreciated nor studied. These paintings want to be not only cleaned and varnished, but to be relined, because the original canvasses are puckered and rotten, and partly detached from the stretchers. If not speedily put into the hands of an artist for restoration, these pictures will soon cease to exist, as the paint is, in some places, peeling itself from the canvas.

There are also three small paintings, not by any means equal to the others as works of art. One is the effigy of our Lord, another that of the Virgin Mary ; the former dates from the time when the Mission was under the charge of the Jesuits, and the third is one given by Father Duplessis to

Father Jean Baptiste Maurice, S. J., who died in 1746, and was the immediate predecessor of Father Coquart, who laid the foundation of the chapel, as already recorded. There are still preserved some chandeliers carved by the Jesuits; beyond these, the "Louis Quatorze Bell," and the paintings, there is nothing of special interest in the chapel, but there is, and always ought to be, an archæological interest in the site where the Cross was first planted at the mouth of the Saguenay, and where the Indians (Montagnais) of the district were baptized and received the sign of the holy cross in token of their new birth, and their admission to the privileges of Christianity. I should like to see erected on the site a chapel rivalling in beauty any on this continent, nay even the famous La Sainte Chapelle, Paris, or the Chapel of St. Stephen, Westminster Palace.

Not deeming such a consummation probable or possible, let those who have any veneration for their country's history aid the restoration of the present chapel. Let the descendants of those who played so important a part in the stirring times of Champlain, Pont-gravé, Montmorency, Maisonneuve, Laval, De Frontenac, La Salle, De Longueuil, Vaudreuil, Beauharnois, Montcalm, and De Salaberry, help to rescue the Chapel of Ste. Croix from its present degraded condition. The western porch with the steps leading thereto are in a wretched plight, the building itself requires not only renovation, but enlargement and decoration. For this purpose subscription boxes are put up in the chapel and at the Tadousac Hotel, and it is to be hoped that no visitor to this place of rest and recreation will omit to drop his spare silver into them. Assuredly all Christian souls ought to feel, no matter to what denomination they belong, that this cradle, as it were, of the Gospel in Canada ought to be had in everlasting remembrance. I have given as much information as I could possibly collect from the resident priest, who de-

plores not only the condition of his chapel, but the very poor condition of the people committed to his charge. Relative to the history of the Mission—those desirous to obtain more information will find it in the "*Relations*," or in some of the works collected in the library of the Historical Society of Quebec, now presided over by Mr. J. M. LeMoine, who has contributed much to the chronicles of the St. Lawrence. Enough has been written, I hope, to stir up the wills of not only the Roman Catholic, but the Protestant churchmen of the Province of Quebec to make the Chapel of Ste. Croix worthy the name it bears. The source of the stream of evangelizing and christianizing the Indians of Canada, the Montagnais, Iroquois, Chippeways, Algonquins, &c., must be traced to Tadousac, whence it has flowed to places which the mighty waters of the River St. Lawrence, with its chain of lakes, have not reached. The benefit of having the descendants of those savage and warlike tribes peaceful and industrious is not to be measured by their lacrosse playing. The precepts of the Christian religion first taught their forefathers by those Jesuit missionaries have destroyed the turbulence of their passions and softened their manners. If Runnymede, where the "palladium of liberty" and the basis of the English laws and constitution was commenced in the Magna Charta, is considered a hallowed spot by Englishmen, so ought Tadousac to be so considered by Canadians for the introduction of a greater liberty, a charter, now written in a language understandable by the once unlettered and ignorant and implacable Indian.

Enough and enough. The enlargement and restoration of the Chapel Ste. Croix rests with the readers of this appeal. But there is another appeal which ought to be answered at once.

Adjoining the chapel is a "graveyard" grown over with thorns and thistles, wild raspberries and rank weeds, which overtop the rude wooden memorials sacred to the ashes of

those reposing within its precincts. The cost of clearing it and of the erection of a large cross, symbolic of the faith of all Christians, can be defrayed at the cost of about fifty dollars, which the descendants of those buried in "God's Acre" cannot through their poverty do.

Hoping and believing this appeal will not be in vain, I commend the restoration of the chapel, the clearing of the graveyard and the erection of the cross, to all whom it may concern, and simply sign myself

THOMAS D. KING.

July 30, 1879.

P. S.—Since the above was written, the author visited Tadousac and superintended the clearing of the graveyard and the erection of a wooden cross which is visible from the entrance of the Saguenay. The graveyard has been divided by means of gravel walks into four parterres, and the ground sown with white and red clover. At the intersection of the walks, a Latin Cross, 18 feet high, with trefoil finials, and three steps at its base, was erected on Friday the 7th of August, and on the Sunday following, in the afternoon, it was blessed by Père Felix Gendron, in the presence of his congregation and many visitors. After the religious ceremony, Père Th. G. Rouleau delivered a very eloquent and impressive oration in the French language upon the symbolism of the Cross.

Upon clearing away the brambles and brushwood which encumbered the graveyard, nothing possessing archæological interest was discovered. There were only two little unassuming head-stones, with brief inscriptions, and one iron cross with open fret work. The other monuments commemorative of the dead were merely wooden slabs and plain wooden crosses, painted black, the majority without any su-

perscription, and many of them rotten or dilapidated. All were as rude and simple as the people who inhabit the neighbourhood. These unlettered people, however, have not been guilty of erecting those "expressionless inanities" and "ambitious incongruities" which adorn our Mount Royal cemeteries, many of them travesties of monumental art, with tablets filled with pompous epitaphs. Death has not been parodied by them, nor its aspects made horrible by the introduction of scythe-bearing skeletons, deaths'-heads and cross-bones,—or by grinning skulls, sickly angels and cherubim,—or by trumpets, doom-bells, and sand-glasses.

The writer would have erected a copy of one of the ornamental floriated crosses of the early part of the 16th century, had the means been at his disposal, but as the subscriptions obtained in the alms-boxes at Fennel's Hotel and the chapel of Ste. Croix, during his stay at Tadousac, only amounted to forty-seven dollars, he could do no more. He desires to return his thanks to those who so cheerfully and quickly responded to his appeal, thus enabling him to do the first portion of the work.

The second portion, viz. :—The enlargement and decoration of the chapel is yet to be done. And, as he thinks that following the almost universal practice of commemorating the dead by means of monuments is a laudable one, it would be fitting to do so in the case of Jacques Cartier, de Roberval, Champlain, Laval, and other early pioneers of our commerce and civilization. Again, he thinks that no more graceful memorial could be erected to their honour than the enlargement and decoration of the chapel of Ste. Croix, and he fervently hopes that *Canadians* of every creed and nationality will unite in jointly and severally contributing a sufficient sum to commence the work in the spring of 1880.

T. D. K.

